

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Eli Ticknor, and I am 14 years old.

EXHIBIT 7
DATE 1-8-09
HB 62

I have been trapping for 6 seasons, and attended trapping camp 4 times. My brothers and I run trap lines together, and sometimes our dad helps too. We don't think that it is right for the government to force someone to take a trapping education course in order to trap. Under this bill, anyone over 12 years old who wants to buy their first trapping license would have to take the course. This would include landowners who simply want to control predator populations on their own property. My grampa owns 3200 acres of land near Columbus. He used to make a living trapping in Elliston, and he knows a lot about it. He must trap the beaver population on his property, or the beaver will flood the county road, and the taxpayers will have to pay to fix it. He traps and shoots coyotes that prey on his calves, the fox that will wipe out his pheasant population, badger that dig holes that will maim or kill his horses and cows that step in them, and coons that eat his livestock feed. He also traps muskrat that will eat all the vegetation around his pond causing erosion.

People need to have a realistic view of the damage that would happen if fur-bearers and varmints are not regulated. Traps do not kill people, and do not need the same regulations as hunting with guns do.

This bill would cost a lot, and Montana does not have extra money for this right now. FW&P generously helps to fund the trapping camp, but they would have to stop giving scholarships to the camp to help fund the trappers education classes. Last year my family missed the deadline for applying for the scholarship. Because that adds up to a lot of money for all of us boys, we were not able to afford to go. How many other future trappers would miss out on the camp because they could not afford it without the scholarships available?

Government should only make laws that are really needed. This is not really needed, and so it is a waste of your time and the taxpayer dollars. Please vote AGAINST requiring trapper's education courses.

Thank you for listening.
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